

Sheet Metal Workers' International Association

Local Union



No. Forty

Hartford, New Haven, Middlesex, Tolland, Windham, New London Counties, State of Connecticut and Fisher's Island, State of N.Y.

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TESTIMONY of

Jeremy Zeedyk

Business Representative

SB 81 AN ACT CONCERNING JOURNEYMEN AND APPRENTICES

February 17, 2015

Honorable Senator Winfield, Honorable Representative Tercyak, and esteemed members of the Labor Committee:

Sheet Metal Air Rail and Transportation (SMART) International Union Local 40 (SMART) submits this testimony in opposition to Raised Bill 81 AN ACT CONCERNING JOURNEYMEN AND APPRENTICES.

My name is Jeremy Zeedyk and I am the Business Representative of SMART Local 40 which is a building and construction trades and production union which represents over 1000 working families who are employed by approximately 50 signatory construction contractors constructing, renovating and testing buildings throughout Connecticut and the region, many of which are State of Connecticut projects.

SMART Local 40 believes that the apprenticeship ratio is an issue that has been put to rest a few years ago when a panel or commission, which included many, if not all, interested parties was put in place to agree to the apprenticeship ratio that is in place currently. That ratio is 1 apprentice for the first journeyman, then 1 apprentice for an additional journeyman followed indefinitely by 1 apprentice for each additional 3 journeymen. The proposed changes in this bill will not increase the number of qualified journeymen available to employers, but will serve only to increase the number of un-skilled lower paid workers which will have the effect of increasing the cost of construction due to delays, re-work and increases to workers compensation and liability insurance for all parties.

There are currently 1,504 active apprenticeship programs of which very few workers have ever completed an apprenticeship for a variety of reasons. The overwhelming majority of completed apprentices come from a very small number of these programs. If there were a need for having additional apprentices then these programs would be utilized much more frequently and more apprentices would complete the training and achieve journeyman status.

SMART Local 40 believes that there are many concerns with this proposed bill, safety of the workers being the most important, and would be happy to have further discussions with the committee to express our concerns and offer input for solutions to this and other issues concerning the building and construction industry.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Zeedyk
Business Representative
SMART Union Local 40